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General Assembly
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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 2 February 2015 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

As the Security Council remains sidelined vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to exploit the international community's inaction by persisting with its illegal policies and practices with impunity. In particular, the Israeli Government continues its insidious colonization of the Palestinian land that it has belligerently, illegitimately occupied since June 1967, in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, as well as international criminal law as articulated in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

There is no difference — whether through periods of peace process or periods of unrest and conflict, Israel has never ceased its settlement activities in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. In words and in deeds, every single Israeli Government has actively carried out this illegal settlement campaign, openly entrenching the occupation in every way. The latest such step was taken on Friday, 30 January, when it was revealed that the occupying Power has decided to move forward with the construction at least 450 new settlement units in various areas throughout Occupied Palestine, including in East Jerusalem.

Despite the widespread condemnation and calls for cessation, Israel continues expropriating Palestinian land and property, constructing and expanding its colonial settlements to which it has transferred hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers, constructing a massive wall and thereby severely fragmenting the Palestinian land, forcibly transferring thousands of Palestinian civilians and planning and constructing other infrastructure to serve the illegal settlements, including segregated Israeli-only roads. Cumulatively, this illegal and destructive campaign has not only cast serious doubts on the prospects for the two-State solution, but also *given greater viability to the inevitability of a one-State* outcome.

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While recalling the many Security Council resolutions directly addressing this crime, including resolutions 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980) and 478 (1980), the failure of the Council in this contemporary period to send a firm message to Israel that such settlement activities will not be tolerated and that it will be held accountable for such breaches has undoubtedly emboldened Israel to continue its crimes without fear of consequence.

It is high time to stop this impunity. It is time for the international community to act in a manner consistent with its clear position regarding this conflict and, specifically, Israeli settlement activities. Actions must be taken to uphold the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, as well as the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice. The Council must be at the forefront of this effort, acting in line with its duties under the Charter of the United Nations to contribute to the pacific settlement of this conflict, which remains a potent source of instability, tension and violence and a threat to international peace and security.

At the same time, I must draw your attention to the continued killing and injury of Palestinian civilians by the occupying Power. The Israeli occupying forces continue perpetrating violent military raids and attacks against unarmed, defenceless civilians and firing at Palestinian fishermen off the coast of the Gaza Strip, endangering lives and repeatedly causing death and injury. Also, extremist Israeli settlers continue to terrorize the Palestinian people, committing daily acts of violence, destruction and intimidation and frequently causing civilian casualties, including children.

The latest victim of such brutality was a young Palestinian, Ahmed Al-Najjar, age 19, who was shot and killed by the Israeli occupying forces on Saturday, 31 January 2015, in the village of Burin near the city of Nablus. On Sunday, a 28-year-old man who was working as a photographer for the Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem, was injured after being run over by an Israeli settler in Al-Khalil. This was followed by a deliberate attack by another Israeli settler today, 2 February, who struck a vehicle belonging to the Palestinian security services, injuring seven officers.

Also today, an Israeli settler shot and injured a 17-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammed Yousef Burqan, while he was tending his herd of sheep in the Silwan neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem, which has witnessed increased and more vicious attacks by extremist settlers. Indeed, Israeli settlers have been so emboldened by the lack of accountability, especially in the wake of the kidnapping, killing and burning alive of 16-year-old Mohammed Abu Khdeir in June 2014, for which no person has been prosecuted, that they have even tried to kidnap Palestinian children as young as 7 years of age in Occupied East Jerusalem.

It is evident that these Israeli violations and crimes will only continue and escalate in the absence of any real effort by the international community, including the Security Council, to hold Israel accountable and compel compliance with international law. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held to the same standards as all other States and cannot continue to be absolved of its legal obligations. Moreover, calling for peace negotiations without addressing the current circumstances will only result in continued failure of negotiations, as has been the case for more than two decades. Respect for the law must accompany any resumption of negotiations and it is time for the international community to take

action to ensure both, as an integral part of its responsibility towards this conflict and the long-standing goal of achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 535 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 29 January 2015 (A/ES-10/671-S/2015/68) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations